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— Mayor Doug Von Gausig
of Clarkdale
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VERDE WATERSHED MAYORS DISCUSS WATER ISSUES WITH SENATOR KYL

Yavapai County Mayors Doug Von Gausig of Clarkdale, Karen Fann of Chino Valley and Jack Wilson of Prescott, met Monday morning, October 6, with Senator Jon Kyl in his Phoenix office. The three mayors, along with Nature Conservancy Government Relations Director Cheryl Lombard, spoke for over an hour with the Senator about various water topics concerning Northern Arizona and the Verde River Basin. Cottonwood Mayor Diane Joens was scheduled to accompany the mayors but was unable to attend.

According to Von Gausig, the mayors met with Kyl to discuss the fact that the communities on both sides of Mingus Mountain are serious about working together to solve their mutual long-term water supply problems. He said that the Senator was very receptive and encouraged to hear that there was a possibility the Verde River Basin Partnership may merge with the Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee in some way. “Senator Kyl was incredibly helpful, and we all came away with a much better understanding of the Federal position in helping solve our future water challenges,” Von Gausig commented.

The three also discussed future water importation and augmentation projects for Northern Arizona, including the possibility of a pipeline from the Colorado River to serve communities from Tuba City to the Verde Valley and

the tri-cities area. According to Wilson, the Senator was very frank about the challenges associated with large-scale importation, emphasizing that a thorough and honest assessment of the environmental, legal, political and financial feasibility of such projects is vital to their success. “He was very direct in his opinion that importation from the Colorado River would involve the political engagement of the Upper Colorado River states (Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and New Mexico) as well as the Lower Basin states” (Arizona, California and Nevada).

Fann said that Senator Kyl was encouraging about the possibility of Federal funding at some point in the future as long as “all the stakeholders in the basin were working together and that they had realistically assessed their needs and challenges.” Kyl explained that Federal legislators would rely upon state legislators, the Department of Water Resources, and other third parties to confirm that the communities are working together before U.S. Senators could actively support water solutions for central Arizona.

Senator Kyl also agreed to provide a briefing paper and to sponsor a public meeting in which he and his staff would discuss both the benefits and challenges of long-range water augmentation in Northern Arizona. Before being elected to the Senate, Kyl was a highly respected water attorney in Arizona.

ADWR RECEIVES VIGOROUS PROTEST TO PRESCOTT'S APPLICATION FOR INCREASED ASSURED WATER SUPPLY DESIGNATION

Prescott's application to the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) for an increase of approximately 11,500 acre feet per year or about 78 percent in its assured water supply designation generated vigorous protest. The largest part of the increase reflects importation from the Big Chino Valley of about 9,500 acre feet per year for use by the City of Prescott and the Town of Prescott Valley. The deadline for letters of objection was September 12. As reported in The Daily Courier, more than 50 letters of objection were received by ADWR, most of which came from individual citizens. However, other objectors include: the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the City of Phoenix, the City of Tempe, the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, the Salt River project, The Nature Conservancy, the Town of Camp Verde, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Yavapai Apache Tribe.

Apparently a sample letter distributed by email by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) provided the basis for some, if not many, of the individual letters of objections. Major points in the CBD's sample letter are as follows:

- *A.R.S. § 45-555(E), which authorizes the withdrawal of water from the Big Chino for inter-basin transport by the City of Prescott is an unconstitutional special or local law, giving Prescott a privilege not afforded others.*

- *The promised deliveries of 4,000 acre-feet/year of water from Prescott to Prescott Valley are not authorized by the statute. Water promised by Prescott to Prescott Valley cannot be included in the modification of Prescott's assured water supply designation.*

- *The agreement between Prescott Valley and the State Land Department transferring 2,000 acre-feet/year of the Big Chino water is clearly not authorized under the statute. Water delivered to Prescott Valley, and then further delivered to the State Land Department cannot be included as a basis for the modification of Prescott's assured water supply designation.*

- *A.R.S. § 45-576(J) defines "assured water supply" as:*

- 1. Sufficient groundwater, surface water or effluent of adequate quality will be continuously available to satisfy the water needs of the proposed use for at least one hundred years. ...*

- 2. The projected groundwater use is consistent with the management plan and achievement of the management goal for the active management area.*

- 3. The financial capability has been demonstrated to construct the water facilities necessary to make the supply of water available for the proposed use, including a delivery system and any storage facilities or treatment works. ...*

ADWR Director Herb Guenther has been quoted in The Daily Courier (Mason helps air Verde water issues, November 10, 2007) as saying, "If we significantly exceed natural and artificial recharge, the probability is ... we eventually impact the base flow" of the Verde River.

The basin is currently close to being in balance. Pumping additional water from the Big Chino, however, will eventually reduce discharge to the river, impacting the rights of downstream water users and habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife. These impacts will trigger legal challenges affecting the amount of water available for withdrawal and supply to customers. The water will not be continuously, legally available for 100 years, thus it does not meet the criteria for determining an assured water supply as defined under A.R.S. § 45-576(J)(1).

Further, it is not clear, as specified under A.R.S. § 45-576(J)(3), how the pipeline infrastructure will be financed at this time.

As provided through Executive Order No. 91-6, Protection of Riparian Areas, issued by Governor Rose Mofford, "...2. All state agencies shall rigorously enforce their existing authorities to assure riparian protection, maintenance, and restoration." ADWR must, therefore, utilize its full authorities to protect the Verde River.

As noted in The Courier, ADWR has 45 days (until about mid-November) to review the matter before making a decision on how to proceed. *Prepared by Ed Wolfe*

VWA meetings in

November and December:

Wednesday, November 19, 10 AM

Public Safety Building, Cottonwood

Presentation: "Climate Change and Arizona: A Look at the Past, Present, and Future" by climatologist and meteorologist Dr. Michael A. Crimmins, U of A

Wednesday, December 17, 10 AM

Board of Supervisors Meeting Room, County Bldg. Fair Street, Prescott

Presentation: "Is Artificial Recharge of Treated Effluent a Safe Long-Term Strategy?"

by cell biologist Dr. Frank Butterworth, Institute for River Research International

Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee (WAC) Update

The Yavapai County Water Advisory Committee has continued to work on priority projects including the Central Yavapai Highlands Water Resource Management Study (CYHWRMS) with the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Northern Arizona Regional Groundwater Model with ADWR and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

The CYHWRMS is proceeding with Phase 1 in order to identify planning areas within the study area, technical and political points of contacts, current and future populations, with additional current and future water demands. Phase 1 will answer the key questions of “is there an unmet future demand?” and “if so, how large and where are the unmet demands within the project area?” Alternatives for meeting any unmet demand will be developed in a later phase of the study. The figure below is a map that shows the study area.

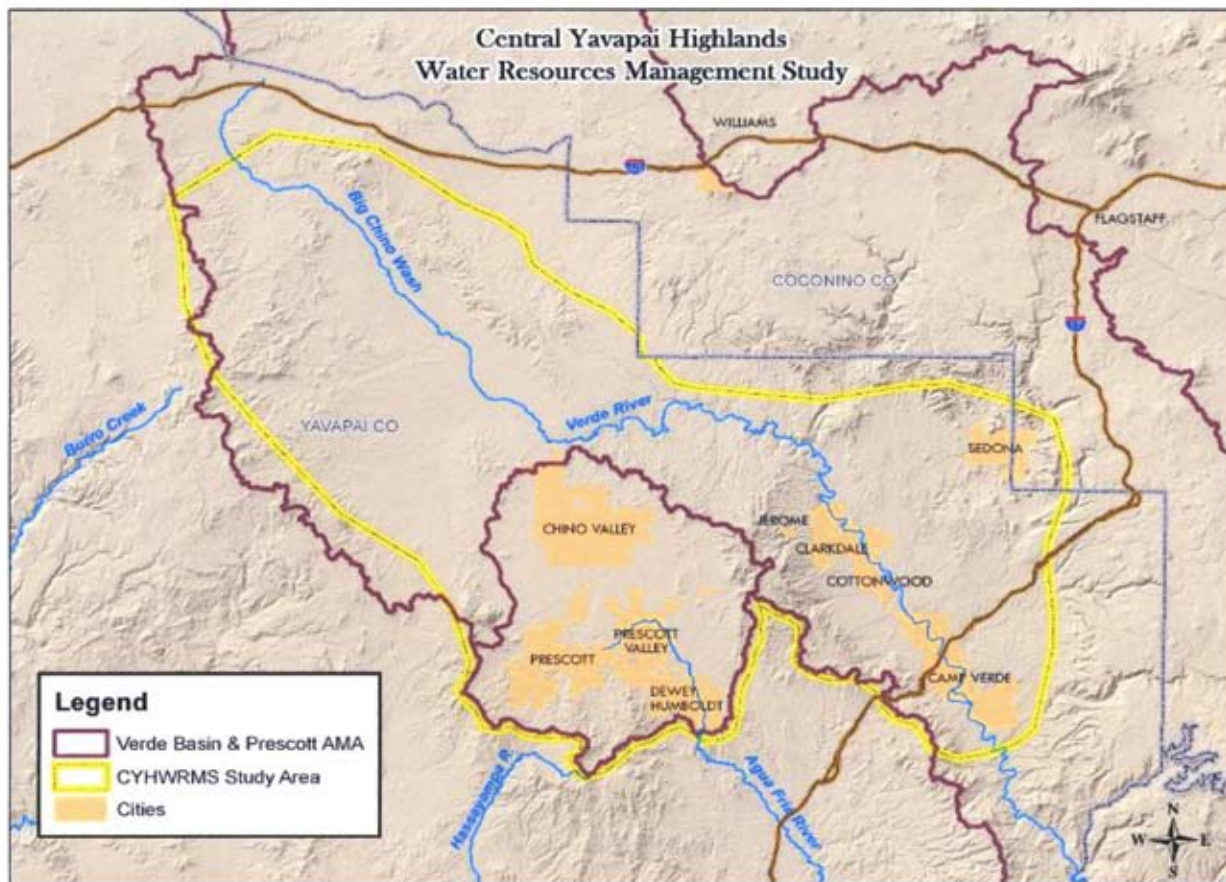
The USGS regional model has been constructed and is nearly ready to be utilized as a predictive tool for future groundwater conditions. The transient model of Regional Groundwater Flow Model is undergoing final “calibration” in order to match model outcomes to historical data. Once the historical data can be approximately reproduced, the modelers will have confidence in their parameterization of

the model and will be ready to run the model with future growth and water-use scenarios provided by the WAC. Modelers, technical representatives and politicians will then interpret model results in light of planning needs, future model-runs and model refinement.

The WAC has had several speakers over the previous quarter including Greg Kornrumph of SRP on SRP issues in the Verde Valley; Haley Rasmussen, Abia Judd School 5th grader on a student water audit of the Abia Judd School in Prescott; and Jim Leenhouts of the USGS on the current status of the regional groundwater model. Future speakers include Leslie Meyers (USBR) in October with an update on the appraisal level study (CYHWRMS). Kerry Schwartz (U of A) and Edessa Carr (Cooperative Extension) will present on Project WET and other water education programs in Yavapai County (November). Also in November, the WAC hopes to hear from Don Bills (USGS) and James Hogan (U of A) regarding results of surface water work in the Verde Valley.

Please contact the WAC Coordinator, John Rasmussen, for more details on any of the WAC activities or if you would like to be added to the WAC email-recipient list (john.rasmussen@co.yavapai.az.us or 928-442-5199).

Prepared by John Rasmussen



UVWRPC COMPLETES REGIONAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM REPORT

The Upper Verde River Watershed Protection Coalition in September completed its report “Regional Water Conservation Program Development and Recommended Implementation Plan”. After a brief introduction (Chapter 1), the report contains chapters addressing in detail: (2) Coalition area water-use rates and trends; (3) existing Coalition area water-conservation programs with comparisons to programs in other Arizona cities as well as cities in California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Nevada; (4) results of a survey of nearly 3,000 Coalition-area homeowners about irrigation water-use habits, housing and lot characteristics, landscaping type, preferences about how conservation information is received, and opinions regarding the area’s water-resource issues; (5) analysis of residential and commercial customer incentive programs; (6) analysis of potential regional water-conservation ordinances, including their likely cost and effectiveness; (7) costs and benefits of potential customer outreach (audit) programs; (8) public

education and information programs.

The final chapter (9) examines a “balanced conservation program”— one that addresses all water use sectors (residential and nonresidential), provides financial incentives for the installation of water-saving technology and landscape conversions, includes public education and information elements, provides customer audits, and includes ordinances that require water-efficient plumbing and landscapes in new development, and tiered conservation rate structures. With full funding estimated at \$382,000 per year, the balanced plan has a goal of saving 962 acre-feet-per-year of water over a five-year period. Alternatives for how the program could be managed are described and reduced programs with more limited budgets are considered.

The report is on the Coalition website— <http://www.uvwrpc.org> —(click on “downloads”)— or download directly at <http://tinyurl.com/52xj83>. *Prepared by Ed Wolfe*

Verde River Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Re-study

The Yavapai County Flood Control District is conducting a hydrologic and hydraulic study of the Verde River from Clarkdale to Beasley Flat. The purpose of the study is to update and improve the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for the Verde River. The study will use modern methods and improved topographical mapping to better define and quantify the flood and inundation risks along this reach of the Verde River corridor.

In 1968, Congress established the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The goals of the program are twofold: to protect communities from potential flood damage through floodplain management and to provide access to flood insurance at a reasonable cost.

Each community that chooses to participate in the NFIP works closely with FEMA to identify flood risks and update flood hazard mapping. Together, with State and Local officials, they collect information and perform engineering studies to create accurate Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The improved mapping accomplished under this study will be submitted to FEMA. After review it will be formally issued through their map modernization process.

For more information contact the Yavapai County Flood Control District at (928) 771-3197

Prepared by Charlie Cave, Yavapai County Flood Control District.

Membership Form for the Verde Watershed Association

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Government units | \$ 100 per year |
| Business for profit | 100 per year |
| Civic groups and non-profits | 50 per year |
| Individuals | 25 per year |

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